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(11) Publication number:

0 685 493 A1

(2)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(21) Application number: 94108445.1

(51) Int. Cl. 6: C07K 19/00, A61K 38/17,
//C12N15/62

(22) Date of filing: 01.06.94

(23) Date of publication of application:
06.12.95 Bulletin 95/49

(64) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB GR IE IT LI LU MC
NL PT SE

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(54) Tumor suppressor fusion proteins.

(57) The present invention provides a soluble molecular complex for introducing a cancer suppressor transcription factor to a mammalian cell, the complex comprising a fusion of a ligand for a mammalian cell membrane receptor releasably bound to the cancer suppressor transcription factor. Further provided by the present invention are methods of treating pathologic conditions caused by gene dysfunction or alteration of gene products.

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small cell lung carcinoma cell line *in vitro*.

Figure 13 demonstrates that p110^{RB}-I¹²⁵ localizes to the nucleus of H596 cells in a time dependent manner. (Radke, K. et al., "Membrane Association of 36,000 Dalton substrate for tyrosine phosphorylation in Chicken Embryo Fibroblasts transformed by avian sarcoma virus", *Cell Biol.*, 97:1601-1611 (1983)).

5 The present invention provides a soluble molecular complex for introducing a tumor or cancer suppressor transcription factor to a mammalian cell. As used herein, the term "tumor or cancer suppressor transcription factor" refers to proteins that act to suppress cancer or tumor growth such as Rb or p53. It is intended that the term refers to both the full native protein or to fragments modifications or derivatives which retain the tumor suppressor activity of the native protein. It is also intended that the term encompass 10 proteins having a nuclear localization signal, native or synthetic. For example, the nuclear localization signal present on p56 RB is sufficient to direct nuclear translocation.

This invention provides ligands to a cell membrane receptor, that will induce endocytosis and carry-in the tumor suppressor transcription factor. The ligand must be releasably bound to the tumor suppressor transcription factor, allowing escape of the tumor suppressor transcription factor into the cytoplasm of the 15 cell. As used herein the term "releasably bound" is intended to encompass an extracellularly stable bond that is cleavable under appropriate conditions within the cell so as to release the tumor suppressor transcription factor intracellularly. For example, cleavage of the bond can be pH or enzymologically regulated. As used herein "ligand to a cell membrane receptor" refers to a molecule which binds to receptors located on the cell surface. Such receptors can be tissue specific or can be ubiquitously found on 20 many or all cell surfaces. The cell membrane receptors all provide a -COOH binding site for the ligand. Examples of such receptors are GIP colon cell receptor, bombasin growth factor receptor on lung cells and ferretin.

Two ligands have been examined: Pseudomonas exotoxin A (PE) and interferon alpha (Wick, M.J. et al., "Analysis of the Structure-function relationship of Pseudomonas aeruginosa exotoxin A", *Mol. Micro.*, 4:527-25 535 (1990); Rubinstein, M. et al., "The interferon receptors", *Crit. Rev. Biochem.*, 21:249-275 (1986); Wileman, T. et al., "Receptor-mediated endocytosis", *Biochem.*, 232(1):1-14 (1985); Yonehara, S. et al., "Cell surface receptor-mediated internalization of interferon: its relation to the antiviral activity of interferon", *J. Gen. Virol.*, 64:2409-2418 (1983); Arnheiter, H. et al., "Microinjection of anti-interferon antibodies into cells does not inhibit the induction of an antiviral state by interferon", *J. Virol.*, 52(1):284-07 (1984)). Domain 1 of 30 exotoxin A is important to cell surface recognition and receptor binding while domain 2 is required for translocation out of the endosome (Liu, P.V. "The roles of various fractions of Pseudomonas aeruginosa in its pathogenesis. 3. Identity of the lethal toxins produced *in vitro* and *in vivo*", *Infect. Dis.*, 116(4):481-9 (1966)). The fusion proteins have been constructed containing either partial domain 1, intact domain 1 or both domain 1 and 2. Both ligands, PE and interferon, were constructed as fusions with N-terminal 35 truncated p56Rb and produced E. coli. It is significant that N-terminal truncated p56^{RB} has no activity on its own, unlike p110^{RB}, nor is p56^{RB} active when co-incubated with tumor cells. The fusion proteins so constructed were purified and tested. Unlike p56^{RB} unmodified, the p56^{RB} fusion proteins have the T-antigen binding activity and tumor growth suppression function of the full length p110^{RB}. In this invention, it is also shown that full length (unmodified) RB protein has growth suppression activity under pharmacologically 40 acceptable conditions.

Exotoxin A of Pseudomonas aeruginosa is one member of a family of secreted bacterial toxins that are capable of covalently modifying specific target proteins within mammalian cells. Analysis of the identified domains show that the amino-terminal domain (domain 1) is involved in recognition of eukaryotic target cells. The central domain (domain 2) is involved in secretion of exotoxin A into the periplasm of Escherichia 45 coli. Domain 2 also functions in translocation of exotoxin A from the eukaryotic endosome which containing the toxin after being internalized into susceptible eukaryotic cells via receptor-mediated endocytosis. The carboxy-terminal portion of exotoxin A (domain 3) encodes the enzymatic (toxin) activity of the molecule.

Exotoxin A enters eukaryotic cells via receptor-mediated endocytosis, is internalized into clathrin-coated pits, and proceeds into endosomes (Saelinger, C.B. et al., "Intracellular trafficking of Pseudomonas exotoxin A", *Antibiot. Chemo.*, 39:149-59 (1987)). The receptor of exotoxin A is species-specific, and certain glycosphingolipids - asialo-GM1 and asialo-GM2, but not GM2, GM2, GM3, may act as receptors on the cell surface (Kriwan, H.C. et al., "Many pulmonary pathogenic bacteria bind specifically to the carbohydrate sequence GalNAc beta 1-4Gal found in some glycolipids" *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA*, 85(16):6157-61 (1988)). Using the characteristics of exotoxin A, three different fusion proteins were constructed see 55 Example I and Figure 1 (PEA56RBD0 and PEA56RBD1), Figure 2 (PEA56RBD2S). Both PJH8, PJH14 and Pseudomonas aeruginosa strains are from ATCC (Rockville, MD). Plasmid 44-2 and E. coli BL21 (with pLySS) were provided by Dr. Wen Hwa Lee. Plasmid pflag (IBI, CT) and DH5 alpha competent cells (BRL, Bethesda, MD) were obtained from suppliers. Figure 3 summarizes the final structures of the different PE

- (6). 3' primer for Pseudomonas aeruginosa DNA with Hind III site 5' AAGAAAGCTTGCCGTCGCCGAG-GAACTC
 (7). 3' primer for PJH14 with Ava I site 5' AATTCTCGGGAAAGTGCAGGCGATGAC 3'
 (8). 5' primer for pCGS261 with Hind III site 5' AGCTCTAAGCTTGTGATCTGCCTCAGACTC 3'
 5 (9). 3' primer for pCGS261 with Ava I site 5' AATTCTCGGGTTCCCTACTCTTCAATCT 3'
- PCR reactions were performed under the following conditions:

10	dNTP 10mM buffer 10x 5' primer 3' primer formamide Taq Polymerase	8 µl; 100 ng 300 nM 300 nM 1.5% volume 1 unit
15	dH2O bring to mineral oil	50 µl 50 µl

- Reaction conditions were as follows:
 95° C x 5'
 20 94° C x 1'----55° C x 1'----72° C x 1-2' for 30 cycles
 72° C x 10'

EXAMPLE II

25 Expression and Purification of Fusion Proteins PEA56RBD0, D1, D2S, FID56RB

Based upon the BL21(DE3)pLysS host organism of Rosenberg (Rosenberg, A.H. et al., "Vectors for selective expression of clone DNAs by T7 RNA polymerase", *Gene*, 56(1):125-35 (1987)), after transformation with the PEA56RBD0, D1, D2S plasmid, protein production could be induced by isopropyl-β-D-thiogalactopyranoside. For FID56RB, DH5 alpha was used as the host. Bacterial overnight cultures were prepared by direct inoculation of bacteria from master seed banks into LB media containing 100 µg/mL ampicillin and 20 µg/mL chloramphenicol. After growing 15 hours at 30° C in a New Brunswick Scientific shaker, an OD₆₀₀ of between 2 to 3 was attained, the whole content of the seed flask was used to inoculate 3.4 L medium in a 5 L fermentor. The temperature of the fermentor was set at 28° C, the pH at 6.9, aeration 35 at 0.5 L/min and agitation at 300 rpm. IPTG induction (0.2 mM final concentration) was performed when OD₆₀₀ of the culture reached 7 to 8 and additional LB media and glucose were supplemented. Bacteria were harvested 3 hours after induction, pelleted and frozen at -80° C until use.

Cell homogenates were prepared using a microfluidizer model M110T at 10,000 psig in the lysis buffer containing 10mM phosphate, 1mM EDTA, and 1mM PMSF at pH 7.5. The resulting microfluidized cell 40 lysate was spun down at 10,000 rpm in a JA-10 rotor for 25 minutes at 4° C. Western blot analysis utilizing α-Rb monoclonal antibody 318 of the fusion proteins indicating that they each have the correct molecular weight and react specifically with the Rb moiety at their C-termini is shown in Figure 7.

EXAMPLE III

45 Purification & Biological Activity of the D0 & D1 Fusion Proteins

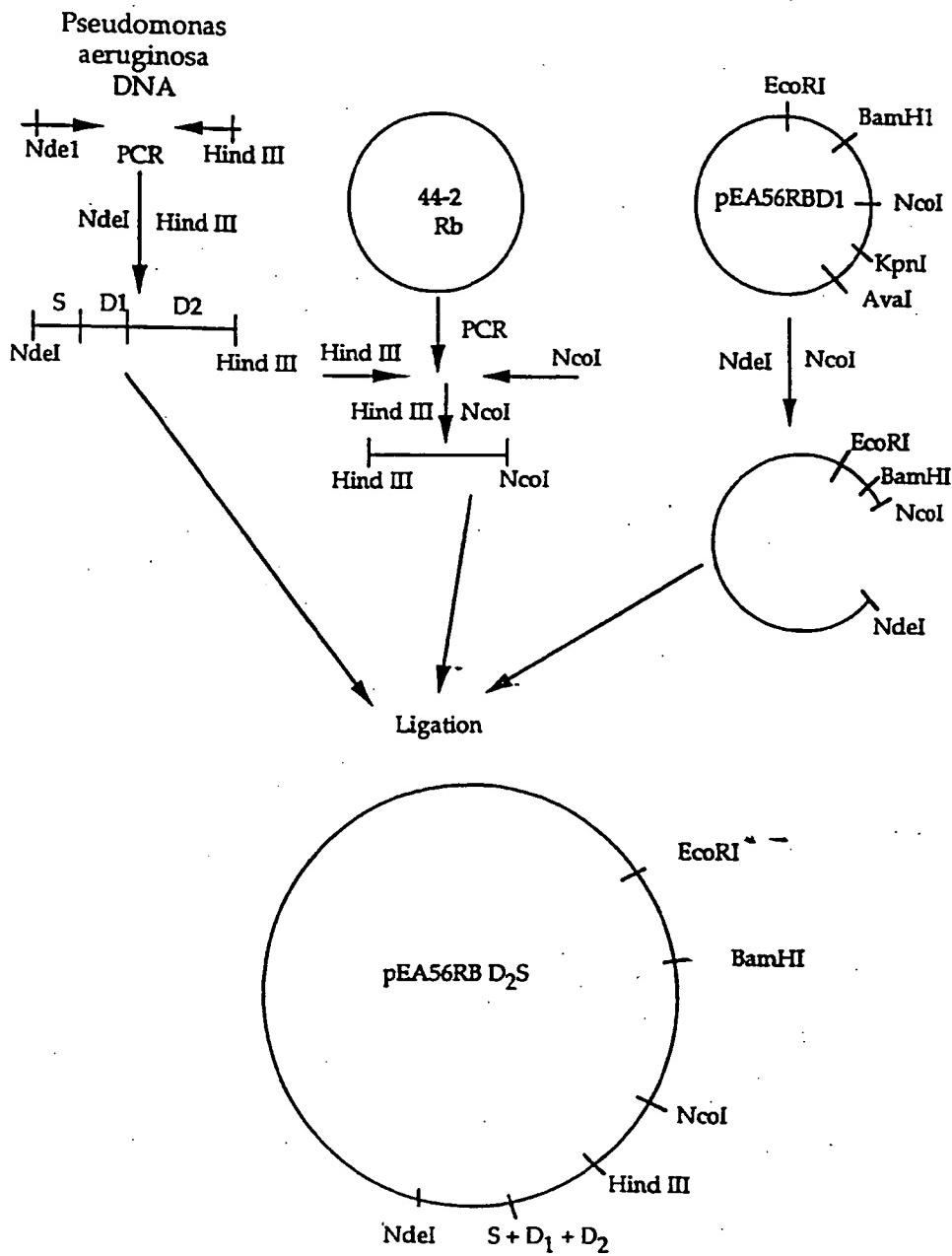
For D0 and D1, the pellet was resuspended in 2X volumes (in mL) with respect to the wet cell weight (in grams) of lysis buffer and spun down again in the JA-10 rotor for 25 minutes. Hence, 2X volumes refers 50 to this volume of lysis buffer. This washing procedure was repeated three times. The remaining pellet was stirred in 2X volumes of lysis buffer containing 0.1% Tween-80 at 4° C for 1 1/2 - 2 hours and then centrifuged again in the JA-10 rotor.

Following the 0.1% Tween-80 wash step, the pellet was resuspended in 2X volumes of lysis buffer containing 4M urea. This mixture was stirred for at least 1 1/2 - hours at 4° C, followed by centrifugation in 55 the JA-10 rotor as before.

The pellet was resuspended in 2X volumes of lysis buffer containing 8M urea and stirred for at least 1 1/2 - 2 hours at 4° C. The resuspended material was centrifuged again as before, the supernatant contains the partially purified fusion proteins.

3. The soluble molecular complex of claim 2, wherein the RB agonist comprises a small molecule derivative of p110^{RB}.
4. The soluble molecular complex of claim 3, wherein the small molecule derivative of p110^{RB} exhibits the biological activity of a soluble full-length retinoblastoma protein.
5. The soluble molecular complex of claim 4, wherein the biological activity includes a nuclear localization signal.
10. 6. The soluble molecular complex of claim 4, wherein the biological activity comprises tumor growth suppression.
7. The soluble molecular complex of claim 3, wherein the small molecule derivative is p56^{RB} and fragments thereof.
15. 8. The soluble molecular complex according to any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the ligand specifically binds to a cell membrane -COOH receptor or to asialoglycoprotein.
9. The soluble molecular complex of claim 8, wherein the asialoglycoprotein is asialo-GM1 or asialo-GM2.
20. 10. The soluble molecular complex according to any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the ligand is Pseudomonas exotoxin A or interferon alpha.
25. 11. The soluble molecular complex according to any one of claims 1 to 10 whereby the fusion protein is covalently modified with a hydrophobic monomer.
12. A soluble molecular complex for introducing a cancer suppressor transcription factor to a mammalian cell selected from the group consisting of PEA56RBD0, PEA56RBD1, PEA56RBD2S and FID56RB.
30. 13. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the soluble molecular complex according to any one of claims 1 to 12 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
35. 14. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 13 for the treatment of retinoblastoma, bladder carcinoma, breast cancer, chronic myelogenous leukemia, acute myelogenous leukemia, testicular tumors, dysplastic and cancerous ulcerative colitis, sporadic sarcomas, prostate carcinoma, osteosarcoma, small-cell lung cancer, synovial sarcoma and other malignancies or hyperproliferative diseases characterized by RB gene dysfunction or alteration of the RB gene product.
40. 15. A method of modifying a cell-regulatory activity of the Rb gene comprising contacting the cell with the soluble molecular complex according to any one of claims 1 to 12, thereby modifying the cell-regulatory activity.
45. 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the ligand releases the RB agonist into the cytoplasm of the mammalian cell.
17. The method of claim 15 or 16, wherein the contacting is effected in vitro.
50. 18. The method according to any one of claims 15 to 17, wherein the regulatory activity comprises tumor growth suppression.

Figure 2
pEA56Rb D₂S Construction



Ligand -Rb Fusion proteins: How do they work?

FIGURE 4

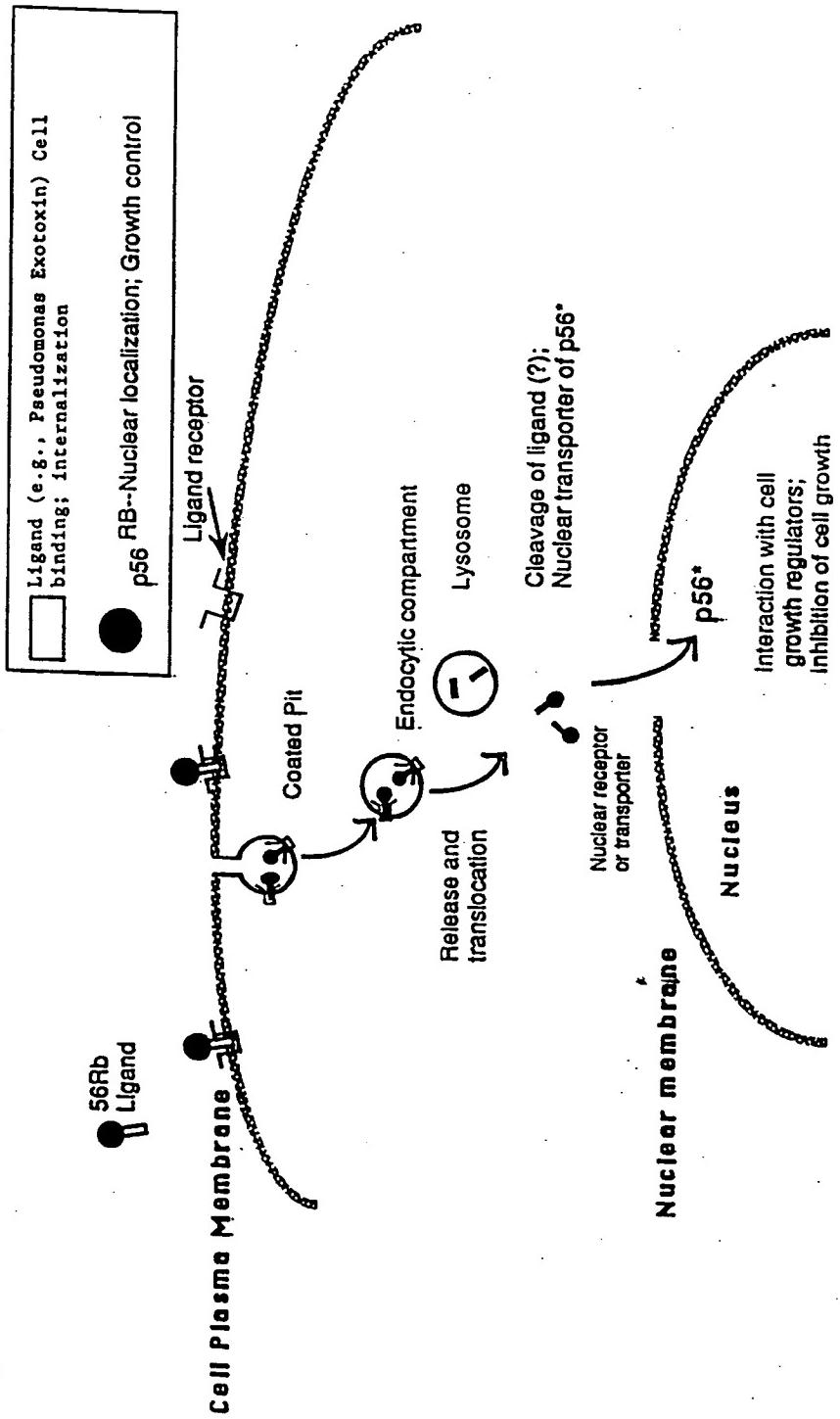


FIGURE 6
Construction of an Interferon-Rb Fusion Protein

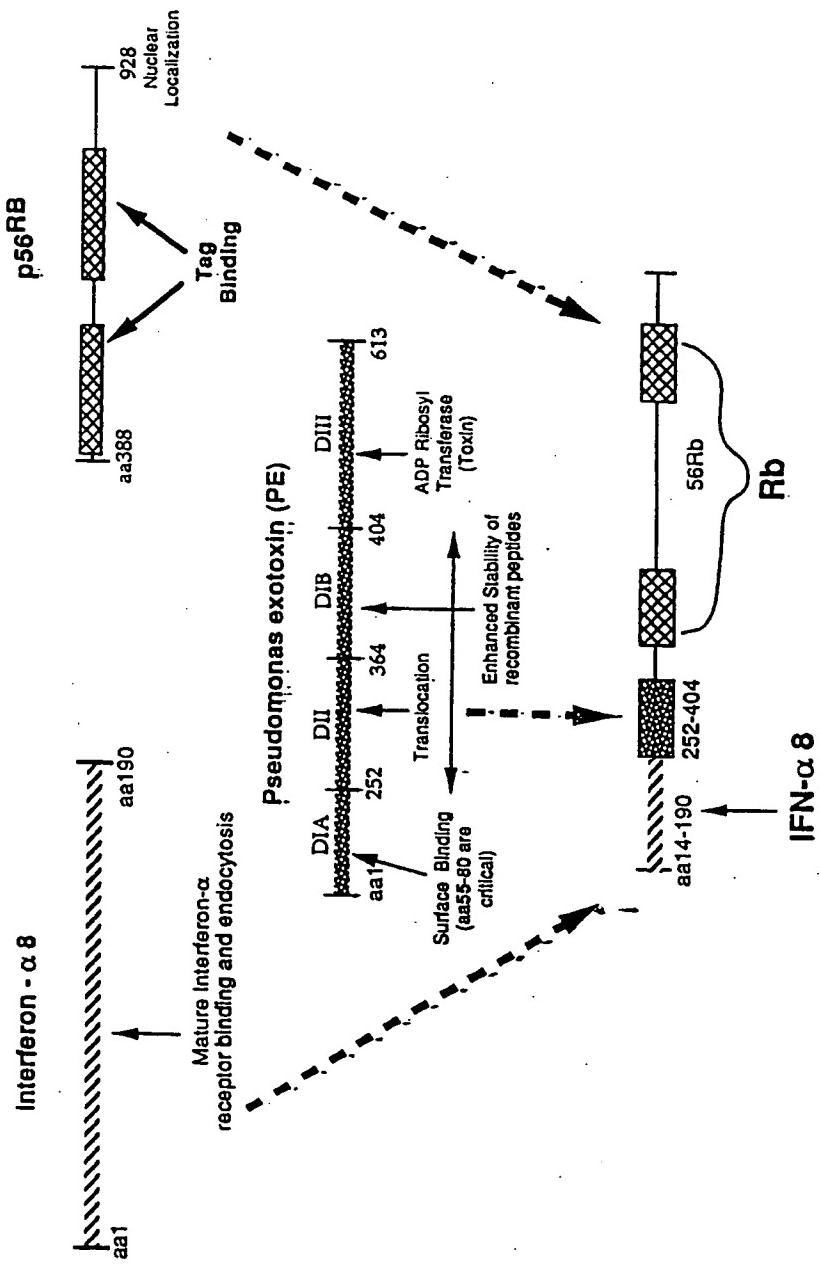
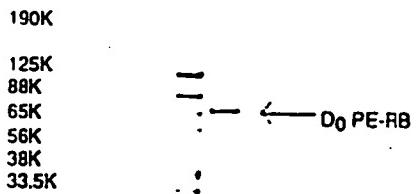
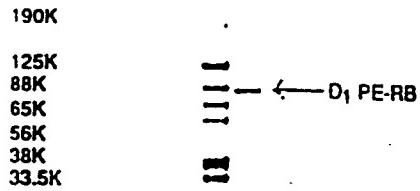


FIGURE 8



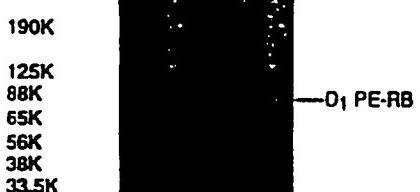
Panel A. SDS-PAGE gel of partially purified D0 PE-RB Fusion Protein.
Lane 1 Molecular Weight Stds.
Lane 2 D0 PE-RB



Panel B. SDS-PAGE gel of partially purified D1 PE-RB Fusion Protein.
Lane 1 Molecular Weight Stds.
Lane 2 D1 PE-RB



Panel C. Western Blot of partially purified D0 PE-RB Fusion Protein.
Lane 1 Molecular Weight Stds.
Lane 2 D0 PE-RB



Panel D. Western Blot of partially purified D1 PE-RB Fusion Protein.
Lane 1 Molecular Weight Stds.
Lane 2 D1 PE-RB

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FIGURE 10

Normal p110^{Rb} Produced in Baculovirus Inhibits the Growth of Rb Negative H128 SCLC Tumor Cells

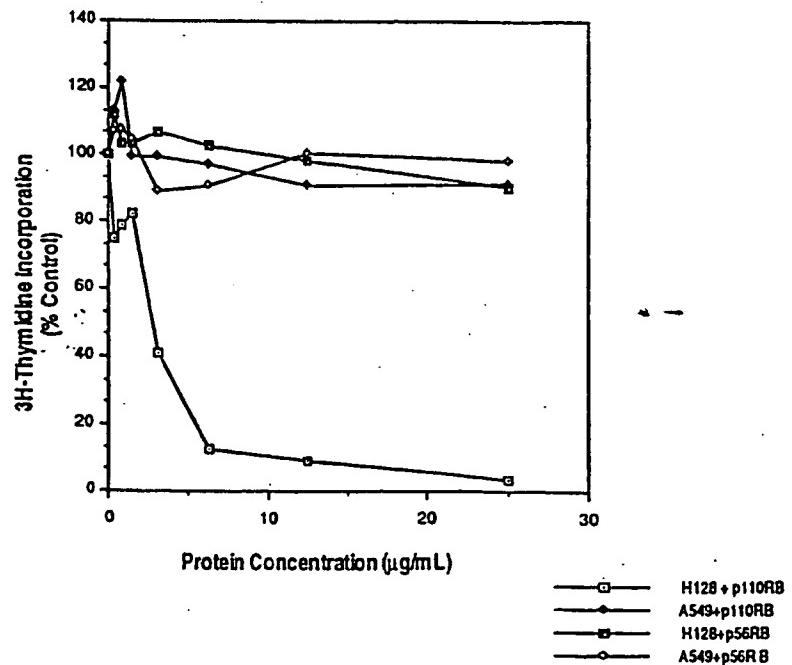
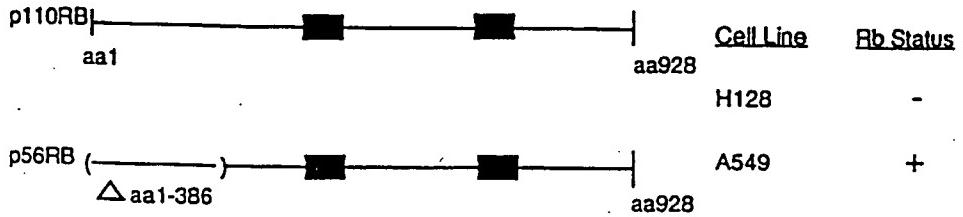
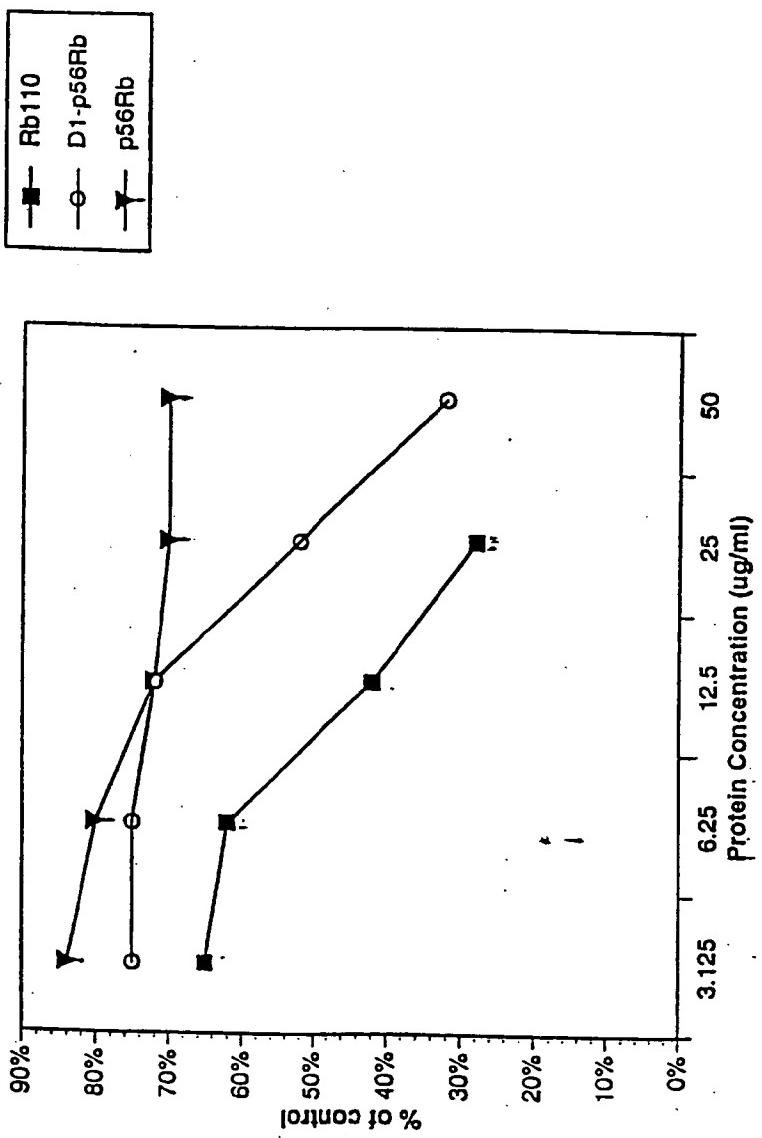


FIGURE 12
Growth Inhibition of Non-small Cell Lung Carcinoma
NCI-H596 by Ligand-Fusion Protein D1-p56Rb





European Patent
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PARTIAL EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT Application Number
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shall be considered, for the purposes of subsequent
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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.)		
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim			
Y	EP-A-0 529 160 (THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA) * claims * * page 2, line 58 - page 3, line 2 * ---	1-6, 12-18	C07K19/00 A61K38/17 //C12N15/62		
Y	PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE USA, vol.87, no.12, June 1990, WASHINGTON DC, USA pages 4697 - 4701 D. HEIMBROOK ET AL. 'Transforming growth factor alpha-Pseudomonas exotoxin fusion protein prolongs survival of nude mice bearing tumor xenografts.' * abstract *	1-6, 12-18			
A	US-A-4 942 123 (LEE ET AL.) * example 1 * ---	1-6, 12-18			
A	WO-A-94 06910 (CANJI INC.) * claims * ---	1-18 -/-	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.) C07K A61K		
INCOMPLETE SEARCH					
<p>The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the provisions of the European Patent Convention to such an extent that it is not possible to carry out a meaningful search into the state of the art on the basis of some of the claims.</p> <p>Claims searched completely: Claims searched incompletely: Claims not searched: Reason for the limitation of the search:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-/-</p>					
<p>see sheet C</p>					
Place of search THE HAGUE	Date of completion of the search 18 November 1994	Examiner Nooij, F			
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-C-

Remark: Although claims 15,16 and 18
are directed to a method of
treatment of the human/animal
body (Art. 52(4) EPC) the search
has been carried out and based on
the alleged effects of the
compound/composition